

Happy Trails Riding Academy

A publication of Happy Trails Riding Academy, a nonprofit organization of therapeutic horsemanship for people who have cognitive, physical or emotional disabilities.

Fall 2021

Meet Lucy....



Lucy Bowen started at Happy Trails just before her sixth birthday. She began as a participant in the Equine-Assisted Therapy classes with Certified Instructor and Occupational Therapist Klara Bergtholdt. Lucy's parents were looking for something that

Lucy, Ridge and volunteer Lauren Christmas would provide her with physical activity and that she could enjoy outside the home.

Before Lucy was born, her mother, Emily, had heard about Happy Trails from a college friend who volunteered with the organization and from a presentation she had heard given at her Soroptimist Club. Emily could not have foreseen that her path would cross with Happy Trails' years down the road.

Lucy was born with heart complications, and was diagnosed with Williams syndrome shortly thereafter. This is a rare condition affecting one in 10,000 people, and is diagnosed with specific genetic testing. Lucy has had 10 surgeries since birth, the last one occurring at three-and-a-half years old. Surprisingly, she enjoys going to see her doctor. She likes her health provider and everyone at the office, so check-ups are easy for her.

Now Lucy is in third grade at Oak Grove Elementary. Being home during COVID was "torture" for her but also gave Emily a chance to see how much Lucy loves school. "Zoom

Roundup



Lucy with staff and volunteers

meetings didn't hold her back from wanting to interact. Always craving social interaction and companionship, Lucy is the 'Queen of Participation,'" says Emily. Now that she is back at school, Happy Trails staff asked what her favorite subject is. Emily laughed and, without flinching, said, "Recess, of course!" She also said Lucy is good at it!

Lucy has advanced from her time with Klara and now participates in Therapeutic Riding classes. She is currently riding the 2020 Region 11 Horse of the Year, Rootin' Tootin' Ridge D'Lite. The instructors at Happy Trails all agree Lucy shows great concern to those around her, and is always eager to know what each lesson has in store. Her zeal to be part of the group and learn "what's next" makes her a delight to have in any class.

In her short time here, Lucy has gained a good sense of independence and autonomy. Her parents are impressed with her horsemanship skills. Mostly, they love that she has some place to go that is all her own!

Happy Trails "2021 Round Up" LIVE

Friday, October 8th at 6pm

To Reserve Your Tickets or Donate a Silent Auction Item Please Call (559) 688-8685

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Erin Brooks,
President
Laura Morrelli,
Vice President
Cindy Brown,
Secretary
Andre Gaston,
Treasurer
David Allen
Cheri Barnes
Steve Duerre
Kendra Fowler
Ken Hernandez
Roland Hill
Ray Lewis
Matt Sozinho
Kathleen Trimble

STAFF

Leslie Gardner,
Executive Director
Nicole Payne,
Director of Services
Beth Spuhler,
Director of Operations
Klara Bergtholdt,
Certified Instructor
Lozen Hendrix,
Certified Instructor
Cathy Fitzpatrick,
Certified Instructor
Sarah Elizondo,
Certified Instructor
Kay Connley,
Volunteer Coordinator
Ron Summers,
Facility Maintenance
Scott Willis,
Facility Maintenance
Natalie Hernandez,
Class Manager

Dear Friends....

As we transition into the Fall and back to normal- the "new normal"- it is important to remember as the world has changed, our mission has not. Happy Trails is dedicated to providing equine-assisted services to children and adults with disabilities. In our 37-year history we have expanded our services to include Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy, Cart Driving and Equine Services for Heroes all while holding true to our mission. This new normal has required us to be creative and inspired a willingness to change.

Members of our community relentlessly give to over 300 nonprofits to ensure that essential services remain available to those who need them most. The support Happy Trails has received since 1984 and especially in the last year cannot be underscored enough. The staff and board that steer this organization are in awe at the community's generosity at a time when it would have been easy to turn inward. Truly, without the support of the community, Happy Trails would not be able to deliver on its mission to a population that lost many critical resources in the midst of the pandemic.

We ask you to pause and consider our mission, the end goal and the reason we do what we do. Thank you for your continued support. Well wishes and good thoughts to you and your family.

Erin Brooks
Board President

Leslie Gardner
Executive Director

Summer Fun

Night at the Movies



Camp Happy Trails



Happy Trails Round Up is Back LIVE

Join us for the Annual **Round Up** fundraiser **Friday, October 8, 2021, 6:00 pm** at our facility. It is a fun filled night to enjoy good food and great company all while benefiting Happy Trails. Event festivities will include a social in the horse barn with featured Happy Trails riders, a silent auction, a fabulous dinner catered by Sue Sa, a blind wine pull, photo booth by Love, Sweet Lulu and barn dance with music by The Josh Day Band. This year we are also excited to hold an opportunity drawing for a chance to win \$10,000 CASH!

Ways to get involved in this year's Round Up:

1. **Become a sponsor** – sponsorship levels start at \$250
2. **Attend the event** – tickets available for \$50 each/\$400 table of 8
3. **Buy a ticket** – to WIN the CASH – \$100 each ticket



A 20-year Partnership

Happy Trails would like to thank and recognize the Fansler Foundation for their continued and generous support of the program. Their initial support began almost 20 years ago when Happy Trails purchased the property on Avenue 256 and began development. Their initial donation of \$50,000 went towards the costs of infrastructure on the property, including fencing material, irrigation and electrical. They also contributed to the lighting and electrical for the covered arena as well as other property development projects over the years.

Happy Trails would like to express our gratitude to Marlene Fansler and the members of the Fansler Foundation board

of directors for seeing the possibilities that operating from its own facility would bring to riders with disabilities. Their generosity has assisted Happy Trails in realizing our dream of developing a first-rate riding facility. Since 2002, the Fansler Foundation has donated over \$250,000 to Happy Trails.

The Fansler Foundation is a not for profit, public benefit corporation established in 1984 by its founder D. Paul Fansler. His vision and purpose for the Foundation was primarily to assist developmentally challenged youth in the Central Valley. Hundreds of riders with physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities have had their lives enriched thanks to the kindness of the Fansler Foundation.





*An investment from your heart...
Riding builds strong wills*

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Visalia, CA
IDEA! Printing

Happy Trails Riding Academy
2773 E. Oakdale Ave.
Tulare, CA 93274

Mailing address
P.O. Box 572
Visalia, CA 93279

Phone: (559) 688-8685
Fax: (559) 688-6786
www.WeAreHappyTrails.com

Sign Up For Our E-Newsletter! Email info@wearehappytrails.com.
You can now follow Happy Trails on Twitter & Instagram @ HTRidingAcademy



Looking For A Few Good Horses

Our riders have a wide range of special needs, and our herd must be varied to meet those needs. We are looking for horses ready for a second career in the therapeutic horsemanship industry. The quality of the horse's movement is what most benefits the participant. We are looking for horses that meet the following criteria:

- Age: 10-16 years old
- Size: 14.3-15.3 hands
- Temperament: kind, quiet, sociable, ground manners, enjoys having a job and is able to walk, trot and canter
- Clinically sound

If you donate your horse to Happy Trails you can be assured that it will receive exceptional care, unlimited love, and constant attention and appreciation. Further, you will receive the deep satisfaction of knowing that you are helping to make a profound difference in the lives of children and adults with special needs! For more information contact our office at 688-8685.

